Thomas Tidwell, 17th Chief of the USDA Forest Service.

Tom Tidwell grew up in Boise, Idaho, and graduated from Washington State University. He has spent 32 years with the Forest Service in a variety of positions. He began his Forest Service career on the Boise National Forest in fire, and has since worked on eight different national forests, in three regions.

He has worked at all levels of the agency in a variety of positions, including District Ranger, Forest Supervisor, and Legislative Affairs Specialist in the Washington Office, where he worked on the planning rule, the 2001 roadless rule and the Secure Rural Schools County Payments Act.

Tom served as the Deputy Regional Forester for the Pacific Southwest Region with primary responsibility for fire and aviation management, recreation, engineering, state and private forestry and tribal relations. Under Tom's leadership, there was a significant increase in the Region's effectiveness to reduce hazardous fuels, and improved cooperation with CALFIRE on wildland fire suppression.

Prior to this assignment, Tidwell served as the Regional Forester for the Northern Region, with responsibility for the national forests and grasslands in northern Idaho, Montana, North Dakota and portions of South Dakota. As the Regional Forester, Tom encouraged and supported community-based collaboration to find resolution on how and where to use active management to restore forest health and address wildfire threat to communities, and to provide protection for the values of unroaded landscapes.

Tom's field experience includes working from the rural areas of Nevada and Idaho all the way to the urban Forests in California and the Wasatch-Cache National Forest in Utah, where he served as Forest Supervisor during the 2002 Winter Olympics. Tom has extensive fire experience, beginning as a firefighter, and accumulating nineteen years as an agency administrator responsible for fire suppression decisions.

Tom is married to Kim, and they have one daughter, MacKenzie.